(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (c) The PSU Oil Marketing Companies have been releasing 14.2 kg cylinder LPG connection to below poverty line women in the rural areas of Andhra Pradesh from July, 1999 and urban areas from February, 2000 under the Deepam Scheme of the Government of Andhra Pradesh. The cost of the security deposit and regulator is met by the Government of Andhra Pradesh. In so far as Oil Marketing Companies are concerned, they charge security deposit on LPG cylinder, based on cost of procurement of cylinders, uniformly throughout the country. Effective from January 2005, the rate of security deposit for new connections in the country has been increased from Rs. 650 to Rs. 850 per cylinder. However, for North Eastern states including Sikkim the rate remains unchanged at Rs. 500/- per cylinder.

ONGC's Bid for stake in a Russian Oil major

1486. SHRIMATI BIMBA RAIKAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the ONGC Videsh Ltd. is currently preparing to bid for a 15 per cent stake in the Yuganskneftgas assets, in the prime production fields of the Russian Oil major Yukos;

(b) whether the auction of Yukos assets is in danger of legal tussles on financial and management issues in the wake of Russian Government slapping claims of tax around $ 6.00 billion on Yukos; and

(c) whether China National Petroleum Corporation has also sounded Russia of its interest to acquire a 20 per cent stake in Yuganskneftgas and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) The auction of Yuganskneftgas, the main producing assets of Yukos is over.

(c) The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas does not posses any confirmed information in this regard.

Allocation of Kerosene to Bihar

†1487. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the demand of kerosene in Bihar during the last two years;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) the details of supply of kerosene in comparison to the said demand;

(c) whether Government are considering any proposal to sell the kerosene through open market; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) Kerosene for distribution under Public Distribution System (PDS) is an allocated product and the Central Government makes allocations to the States/Union Territories (UTs). The States/UTs uplift the allocated Kerosene and distribute it under PDS. Against the allocation of 6,46,618 Metric tonnes (MT) and 6,37,221 MT during the last two years, i.e. 2002-03 and 2003-04, Bihar State Government had uplifted 6,43,968 MT and 6,36,661 MT of Kerosene respectively. The Central Government have commissioned the National Council of Applied Economic Research to under take the first-ever detailed study of Kerosene demand in the country.

(c) and (d) In addition to PDS Kerosene, which is subsidized, oil companies market free sale Kerosene on commercial terms.

Refining Capacity of Oil Refineries

†1488. DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:
SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the oil refineries are operating both in public and private sectors in the country;

(b) if so, the capacity of the oil refineries operating in both the sectors;

(c) the capital invested in the said oil refineries till March, 2004;

(d) whether it is also a fact that the refining capacity of these oil refineries is more than the petroleum requirements of the country; and

(e) if so, to what extent in the year 2004-05?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The details of refining capacity of Oil Refineries working in the public and private sectors in various States of the country are given in the Statement (*See* below):

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.